

## New product to identify badgers infected with bovine TB

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*Our new product processes badger faeces in a novel manner that enables and promotes the selective culture of bovine TB. Use of this product for surveillance on badger latrines will enable more precise monitoring of bovine TB spread and facilitate informed decisions aiding eradication policies.*

TiKa Diagnostics has a new product that improves the sensitivity and utility of existing methods for the detection of live bovine TB from badger faeces. *Mycobacterium bovis* (Mbov) causes Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) in wildlife and domestic animals including cattle, deer, goats, pigs, cats, dogs and badgers. The UK has the highest incidence of cattle associated bTB in Europe and contact with infected animals or related foodstuffs can lead to the development of human tuberculosis. To combat this threat, in addition to standard pasteurisation of milk, Wales and Northern Ireland are currently following a bTB in wildlife vaccination strategy whilst England has recently intensified its current culling strategy.

Badgers deposit their droppings in open dung pits (latrines) found in close proximity to their setts. These are thus mostly specific for individual badger setts and as infected badgers defaecate Mbov, collection offers a convenient way to monitor animal infection without trapping. Until recently badger droppings have not been used to culture for *Mycobacterium bovis* because of the high contamination rate by other faecal and environmental bacteria and the low recoverability of Mbov when associated with faecal matter. TiKa Diagnostics Ltd has invented a patented test able to decontaminate samples without compromising the viability of Mbov. The system also stimulates the growth of the Mbov organism allowing more rapid and more sensitive culture results to be obtained than ever before. This innovation will help veterinarians make faster, more informed decisions on animal tuberculosis treatments, promoting improvement in the efficiency of herd control, reduction of disease spread and rationalisation of efforts to eradicate TB in humans. As the test provides a live Mbov culture, typing is also possible allowing better epidemiological studies and offering assured differentiation of live vaccine strain passage and infection by pathogenic strains.

### About TiKa Diagnostics

TiKa Diagnostics Ltd is a spin out company from St George's University of London. The company was founded 2014 by Dr Tim Bull and Dr Kai Hilpert. TiKa Diagnostics Ltd is specialized on the detection of Mycobacteria in humans and animals. The company has invented a new patented test able to confirm the diagnosis of Tuberculosis (TB) in adults and children significantly faster, with greater sensitivity and with less contamination than has been previously possible. The company has demonstrated that using the new culture system, they can grow the bacterium that causes TB much faster and from a wider range of types of samples. The new enhancing products can be easily incorporated into existing routine clinical laboratory methods. This innovation will help doctors make faster, more informed decisions on tuberculosis treatments. This will lead to improvements in the efficiency of care, better rationalisation of the cost for hospital stays and help to stop the spread of disease.

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### Related Keywords:

TB :: Tuberculosis ::  
Mycobacterium :: Mycobacterium  
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Bovis :: Wildlife TB :: Badger ::  
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